

Your first electronic signature project

**from theory
to action plan**

How do you get started?
And who do you work with?

<http://www.sosaz.com/pa>

How do you start?

Think through the entire process, step by step.

Plan with the idea that *what can go wrong will*.

A caveat:

Creating the electronic equivalent of a signature also creates an electronic document.

That electronic document *may*

- be a public record with records retention requirements.
- need to be in a form that is “readable” at a later date (e.g. in a court of law) with the signature able to be authenticated.

These issues are beyond the scope of the Policy Authority’s review and recognition of a project for electronic signature use.

Whether paper or electronic, the Agency will still need to consistently manage records retention.

How do you start?

Project Scope - general questions:

- What population is it for? Who? How many?
- Think of the ability for electronic transactions as moving from in-office counter transactions to unlimited “web” counter with unlimited business hours (24x7).
- What resources will that require?
- Do you have the resources?
 - Will you need to establish rules for “office hours” - have a follow-up process which involves: when, how, by who?
 - How do you help the user? Have help desk resources?
- Can you afford the expense & risk of adding those resources?
- Can you afford to not add those resources & not do this project?

How do you start?

Project Scope - specific questions:

What kind of hardware/software questions should I be asking?

- What is the expected volume of signatures?
Is it *scalable* if it goes into full day-in, day-out production?
- What type of security will be needed on those signatures & documents? High security will require extra secure tools - e.g. Smartcards.
- What type of security improvements will be needed for the automated business process? (*systems* integrity)
- Long term records retention will affect hardware and software choices? Requires more attention to standards based open systems.

How do you start?

For any Project:

Who do I call first for assistance with feasibility and initial scope support?

Secretary of State's Office (Policy Authority)

How do you start?

When I call,

What information will I need to have ready?

- Description of the business transaction
 1. As it is done now, and
 2. As it will be done under the project.
- Who are the parties (within and external to agency)?
- What are the signature requirements
(by statute, rules, prudent business practice)?
- What are the expected economic benefits?
- What is the strategic impact on the Agency
(is this really going to make a difference)?
- Expected timeline

How do you start?

For any Project:

Who do I call after Secretary of State?

Who else do I need to work with?

- GITA (PIJ)
- GAO (if any payments are involved)
- Treasurer's Office (if any payments are involved)
- AG (enforceable signature?)
- Library and Archives

Secretary of State can provide contact information.

How do you start?

Projects that are not good uses of Electronic Signature technology:

- Any use where there is doubt about the identity of the Signer.
- Any use with a significant risk of the signer's private token being compromised
- Any use where the cost exceeds the benefit
(e.g. electronic benefit transfer -
a PKI based smartcard is possible; but it is more common,
and much less expensive, to deploy debit cards for services
such as food stamps)
- Any use where the process affects personal safety, state or national security.